

Joint Forces Staff College
Joint Advanced Warfighting School



“AFRICOM: Combatant Command for the 21st Century”

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

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13 June 2008

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.					
1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 13 06 2008		2. REPORT TYPE Master's Thesis		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) 23-07-2007 to 13-06-2008	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) COL Richard A. Juergens Jr.				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Joint Forces Staff College Joint Advanced Warfighting School 7800 Hampton Blvd. Norfolk, VA 23511-1702				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER JFSC 25789	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release, distribution is unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT <p>In February 2007, President Bush announced the formation of United States Africa Command or AFRICOM. When it reaches full operational capability in October 2008, it will join the other five combatant commands: European Command, Southern Command, Northern Command, Central Command, and Pacific Command, as the Department of Defense's unified command structure responsible for specific geographical regions of the world.</p> <p>From the beginning it has been made clear that AFRICOM will be organized differently and have a different mission priority than the current geographic combatant commands. Most apparent is the high ratio of assigned interagency personnel as compared to the other commands.</p> <p>This thesis examines U.S. interests and operating environment in Africa to determine AFRICOM mission focus. It also proposes organization structure to facilitate interagency integration and maximize mission effectiveness.</p>					
15. SUBJECT TERMS AFRICOM, Interagency, Africa, Regional Stability, Counter Terrorism					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified Unlimited	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 72	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT Unclassified	b. ABSTRACT Unclassified	c. THIS PAGE Unclassified			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 757-443-6301

Abstract

In February 2007, President Bush announced the formation of United States Africa Command or AFRICOM. When it reaches full operational capability in October 2008, it will join the other five combatant commands: European Command, Southern Command, Northern Command, Central Command, and Pacific Command, as the Department of Defense's unified command structure responsible for specific geographical regions of the world.

From the beginning it has been made clear that AFRICOM will be organized differently and have a different mission priority than the current geographic combatant commands. Most apparent is the high ratio of assigned interagency personnel as compared to the other commands.

This thesis examines U.S. interests and operating environment in Africa to determine AFRICOM mission focus. It also proposes organization structure to facilitate interagency integration and maximize mission effectiveness.

Table of Contents

<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1	Introduction	1
2	Background	4
3	AFRICOM Guidance	8
4	US Interests in Africa	16
5	Operating Environment in Africa	30
6	Interagency Integration	56
7	Conclusion	66

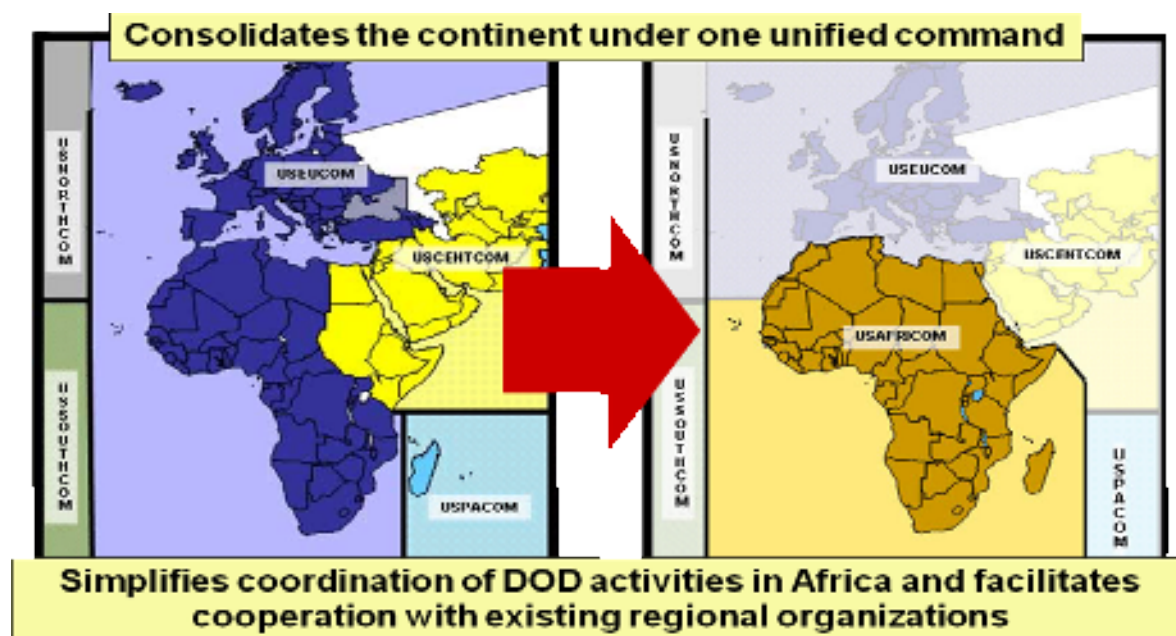
AFRICOM “Combatant Command for the 21st Century”

Chapter 1 Introduction

Unity of command— the principle of war that if achieved is every commander’s dream and when ignored, every commander’s nightmare. History is replete with examples of military successes when all the tools for making war were put at the disposal of a single military commander. Conversely, too many historical accounts and after-action reviews lament the failure of decision makers to properly establish an organization, delineate its chain of command, and resource it to accomplish its stated mission. Against this backdrop, even a cursory view of the world map with the current combatant command delineation, causes one to wince when looking at the continent of Africa. Africa, rich in resources and strategically located, is worthy of the focused attention of the Government of the United States (USG). Because of the multitude of issues affecting U.S. interests in Africa, the USG has rightly taken the first steps to focus the elements of national power on the problems there.

Africa is currently divided between different combatant commands; European Command (EUCOM), Pacific Command (PACOM) and Central Command (CENTCOM). By October 2008 this will change when AFRICOM is established as a Unified Command with the release of the next version of the Unified Command Plan (UCP). The following map, taken from a recent Congressional Research Service Report

on AFRICOM, illustrates the drastic changes to the geographic combatant command boundaries pertaining to AFRICOM.¹



The USG has the opportunity to properly analyze the interests and challenges to those interests in Africa in order to ensure that AFRICOM is properly focused. Focusing AFRICOM on the proper mission set from the start is paramount. There are many challenges, including the high level of resources currently committed to Iraq and Afghanistan as well as the historical stovepipes in the Department of Defense (DoD) and other USG departments and agencies. Getting the AFRICOM focus and structure right should be a top priority. The thesis of this paper is that AFRICOM should focus on creating regional stability and combating terrorism while implementing integrated interagency structure and process to achieve success.

¹ Lauren Ploch, "Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa," *CRS Report for Congress*, (December 7, 2007): 28.

This thesis tackles the problem of AFRICOM focus and structure in seven chapters. Following the introduction in chapter one, chapter two begins with a short background that lays the foundation for the formation of AFRICOM. It includes a short history of the concept of Unified Command as well as a historical look at how the USG and DoD have approached Africa. This assessment is primarily based on assignment of geographic combatant commander (GCC) responsibility in the Unified Command Plan. Chapter three provides an analysis of current executive guidance pertaining to the roles and functions that AFRICOM will fulfill. Chapter four examines U.S. national interests in Africa and recommends mission sets AFRICOM should focus on. Following the analysis of national interests, chapter five examines the operational environment in Africa in terms of how it might affect U.S. interests. Chapter six provides recommendations for two primary organizational structures to best posture for successfully accomplishing the AFRICOM mission on the continent. It will also include an overarching philosophy for interagency integration.

Chapter 2 Background

To fully understand the importance of establishing a combatant command focused on Africa, a short history of the Unified Commands and Department of Defense activities regarding Africa is in order.

History of Unified Commands

The concept of “unified command” came to maturity in the crucible of World War II. Out of necessity came the requirement to place all forces in a geographic area under a single commander. Under this unified command concept, one commander would exercise command and control of all the forces in his assigned geographic area, regardless of service. To assist him, a joint staff was formed with representatives and planners from all the services. This unified approach to command and control, first introduced by the British and later adopted by the U.S., proved successful and became quite common during World War II. “The History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1999” published by the Joint History Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, points out that by the end of the war, the Joint Chiefs concluded that preservation of a unified command structure in peacetime might prove beneficial. As a result, a directive appointing General Eisenhower commander of U.S. Forces in Europe was issued on June 28, 1945 following the German surrender.¹ Lessons learned from the competition for assets in the Pacific

¹ U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Joint History Office, *The History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1999*, by Ronald Cole, Walter S. Poole, James F Schnabel, Robert J. Watson and Willard J Webb, Joint History Office (Washington DC, 2003) 11.

theater between General MacArthur and Admiral Nimitz added further impetus to the service chiefs to codify the unified command concept. After discussions and some measure of compromise, the “outline command plan” was signed by President Truman. This document, dated 14 December 1946, established six regional commands and one functional command. In essence it was the first Unified Command Plan.²

Since then DoD has published twenty successive Unified Command Plans which have directed the establishment, modification, and disbanding of twenty-seven different unified commands.³ The Unified Command system remains an important aspect of U.S. national security and DoD’s efforts to organize to meet the challenges of a dynamic, ever changing world. It is a tribute to U.S. success at institutionalizing the lessons learned regarding unified command during World War II.

When the next UCP is published sometime in 2008, AFRICOM will be established as a Unified Command. With the establishment of AFRICOM, the USG will have a GCC who is able to concentrate his attention on Africa.

Genesis of AFRICOM

Department of Defense responsibility for Africa has evolved over the years as the UCP has matured and undergone alteration to compensate for changing conditions and U.S. interests (and lack thereof). Beginning in 1952, the USG began a series of attempts to assign responsibility for Africa to specific geographic combatant commanders.

² Cole, *The History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1999*, 12.

³ Cole, *The History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1999*, App II.

Initially this was limited to assignment of Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and Libya to European Command in the UCP. Interest in the rest of Africa, commonly referred to as Sub-Sahara Africa, was limited due the fact that many of these countries were still active European colonies.⁴ In 1960 Atlantic Command was given responsibility for Sub-Saharan Africa. Atlantic command maintained responsibility until 1962 when the recently established U.S. Strike Command⁵ was given responsibility. When Strike Command was renamed U.S. Readiness Command in 1972, it lost the mission for Sub-Sahara Africa. For the next eleven years Sub-Sahara Africa was not assigned to a specific geographic combatant command, lending credence to the criticism that the USG has often ignored the continent of Africa.⁶

The October 1983 UCP assigned responsibility for all the countries on the continent of Africa except Kenya, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Sudan, Egypt, Somalia, and Eritrea to European Command. Central Command became responsible for the countries not under European Command's jurisdiction with the exception of the islands in the Atlantic assigned to Atlantic Command and islands in the Indian Ocean, chiefly Madagascar,

⁴ RICHARD G. CATOIRE, "A CINC for Sub-Saharan Africa? Rethinking the Unified Command Plan," *Parameters*, (Winter 2000-01): 103.

⁵ In 1961 the United States Strike Command (STRICOM) was established at MacDill AFB as a unified command with integrated personnel from all branches of the military capable of responding to global crisis. STRICOM was redesignated U.S. Readiness Command in 1972. (<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/macdill.htm>)

⁶ CATOIRE, "A CINC for Sub-Saharan Africa? Rethinking the Unified Command Plan," 104.

assigned to Pacific Command.⁷ The 1983 version of the UCP is the last significant re-allocation of Geographic Combatant Command (GCC) responsibility for Africa—twenty-four years of diffused or little effort.

The current Unified Command Plan, dated 5 May 2006, continues to assign responsibility for Africa to three different unified commands. An assessment of the priorities of each of these three commands shows that none have Africa as its top priority. Three commands attempting to prioritize effort and provide a coherent approach to dealing with the myriad of challenges prevalent in Africa is the type of confusion unified command is meant to remedy. With President Bush's February 2007 announcement of the formation of AFRICOM, over ten years of planning and coordination by the Department of Defense to remedy the lack of focus on Africa came to fruition.⁸

⁷ Cole, *The History of the Unified Command Plan 1946-1999*, 12.

⁸ Stephanie Hanson, "The Pentagon's New Africa Command," *Council on Foreign Relations*, May 3, 2007, <http://www.cfr.org/publication/13255/> (accessed September 12, 2007).

Chapter 3 AFRICOM Guidance

An assessment of current executive guidance pertaining to the roles and functions that AFRICOM will fulfill is vital to understanding how it should organize.

Executive Guidance Regarding AFRICOM

“This new command will strengthen our security cooperation with Africa and create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of our partners in Africa. AFRICOM will enhance our efforts to bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa.”¹ These words spoken by President Bush during a 6 February 2007 speech, in which he announced the formation of AFRICOM, articulates what will become a consistent theme when examining the U.S. interests and missions in Africa. Of note is the fact that the President’s statement does not mention traditional warfighting tasks normally assigned to the Department of Defense. This departure uniquely prioritizes the mission of AFRICOM. An analysis of AFRICOM’s mission in contrast with those of PACOM, EUCOM, and SOUTHCOM demonstrates the difference. AFRICOM’s mission is to “enhance a mutually supporting stable, secure, and prosperous African environment through sustained U.S. government engagement with African, national, and international partners. U.S. Africa Command conducts military operations as directed.”²

¹ Vince Crawley, “U.S. Creating New Africa Command to Coordinate Military Efforts Feb 6, 2007, U.S. Africa Command,” <http://www.africom.mil/getArticle.asp?art=1484> (accessed September 9, 2007).

² AFRICOM Command Brief downloaded 14 Dec 2007 from the JFSC portal.

In comparison, EUCOM “will maintain ready forces to conduct the full range of operations unilaterally or in concert with coalition partners.”³ SOUTHCOM⁴ and PACOM⁵ mission statements are similar to the EUCOM mission statements in emphasizing military operations. Relegation of “military operations” to the last sentence of the AFRICOM mission statement is informative. Clearly it reflects a different focus from that of the other GCCs. Furthermore, the theme in President Bush’s announcement speech stating the AFRICOM goal to “enhance our [USG] efforts to bring peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth” speak to the unique priority that will be the hallmark of AFRICOM.

Another important aspect of executive guidance is the collection of documents that provide guidance regarding Africa. The National Security Strategy (NSS) of March

³ Department of Defense, “Command Mission,” European Command, <http://www.eucom.mil/english/Command/mission.asp> (accessed December 26, 2007).

⁴ SOUTHCOM mission statement - The United States Southern Command’s mission is to conduct military operations and promote security cooperation to achieve U.S. strategic objectives. <http://www.southcom.mil/AppsSC/pages/ourMission.php> (accessed December 26, 2007) However, SOUTHCOM is moving towards a more “soft power” approach to its area of focus and it has been reported that lessons learned from the formation of AFRICOM will be applied to SOUTHCOM transformation soon to be underway.

⁵ PACOM mission statement - U.S. Pacific Command, in concert with other U.S. government agencies and regional military partners, promotes security and peaceful development in the Asia-Pacific region by deterring aggression, advancing regional security cooperation, responding to crises, and fighting to win. First and foremost, we are a warfighting command committed to maintaining preeminence across the full spectrum of operations. We are ready to fight and win, and to dominate in any scenario, in all environments, without exception. <http://www.pacom.mil/about/mvp-statements.shtml> (accessed February 21, 2008)

2006 and the UCP of May 2006 are extremely informative. Although there are other sources of guidance, these two encapsulate much of the strategic level guidance from the USG level.

The NSS provides guidance and imperatives that apply either directly or indirectly to Africa. These must be included in the strategy to build AFRICOM. Some of the general principles mentioned are: promoting effective democracies, building alliances to defeat terrorism, encouraging economic growth through establishment of free markets and free trade, working with others to prevent regional conflict, and promoting the importance of human dignity.⁶ All of these tasks are relevant to Africa.

In order to promote democracy, the NSS speaks of employing the elements of national power: political, economic, diplomatic, and yet it does not mention by name the military element. However in a review of the list that follows, there are clearly tasks that require military support and some where military support is implied. Several examples of direct military support requirements appear. “Tailoring assistance and training of military forces to support civilian control of the military” is a military task.⁷ A stronger example appears in the section regarding the Global War on Terror (GWOT). It states that, “the fight [GWOT] involves using military force and other instruments of military power to kill or capture the terrorists and deny them safe haven or control of any

⁶ U.S. President, “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, (March 16, 2006):1.

⁷ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 6.

nation.”⁸ These are the kinds of tasks that AFRICOM will be called upon to accomplish. This does not mean that AFRICOM will be just like the other GCCs. Instead it is a reminder that AFRICOM must remain prepared to conduct combat operations.

Yet the true challenge to AFRICOM will be the myriad of other tasks it must accomplish that support the efforts of other USG departments and agencies as they work to achieve the goals established in the NSS. This is especially true when AFRICOM’s regional responsibility is considered. As Commander Richard Catorie (USN) points out, “As a truly regional representative of the United States, a unified combatant commander functions as the singular subject matter expert for his or her area responsibility, particularly in regard to security issues.”⁹ Not only will the AFRICOM Commander be required to provide subject matter expertise as a regional representative of the USG, the command’s requirements regarding security in Africa will be significant.¹⁰ As USG agencies and departments set about accomplishing their tasks in Africa, AFRICOM will have to be well integrated to ensure proper security and other support such as transportation and logistics is provided.

Furthermore, with the ability to plan and take a regional approach to solving problems, there is great potential for AFRICOM to help synchronize the efforts of

⁸ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 9.

⁹ CATOIRE, “A CINC for Sub-Saharan Africa? Rethinking the Unified Command Plan,” 102-17.

¹⁰ The security situation in Africa is discussed later in the paper in the section on the operating environment. For purpose of discussion at this point, that fact that Africa will generally pose a challenging security environment suffices in making the point.

individual country teams¹¹ to increase the effectiveness of programs. The NSS points out several of these areas, both generally and specifically pertaining to Africa, in which AFRICOM (if properly postured) could enhance the lead efforts of other agencies and departments.¹² Pursuing free trade agreements, promoting and funding AIDS treatment and prevention programs, assisting in the development of education systems and supporting initiatives to fight famine and starvation are some of the programs planned or in the process of being executed in Africa.¹³ Although not assigned in the NSS, AFRICOM's involvement in supporting these programs is an opportunity that cannot be passed up. If AFRICOM is not involved, the result will be unsynchronized execution of programs in and outside DoD.

The current UCP dated 5 May 2006 provides guidance to the geographic combatant commanders pertinent to AFRICOM organization. Although a new UCP is due to be published in 2008, the portions referenced below in the 2006 version are not expected to be wildly different as they are Title 10 responsibilities that AFRICOM will naturally assume. AFRICOM will be responsible for “deterring attacks against the United States, its territories, possessions and bases and employing appropriate forces should deterrence fail.”¹⁴ Additionally the fledgling command will be responsible for

¹¹ Country team is used generically to represent the U.S. Ambassador and his or her assigned personnel in a given country. The Department of State footprint varies from country to country in Africa.

¹² Two specific recommendations on how AFRICOM might enhance these programs are discussed in chapter six.

¹³ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 28, 31.

¹⁴ U.S. President, “Unified Command Plan, (May 5, 2006):3.

“planning, conducting and assessing security cooperation activities.”¹⁵ In general terms, these two tasks further emphasize the dual role that AFRICOM will fulfill as both a warfighter and as a purveyor of security cooperation. The command must have sufficient capability to plan and conduct combat operations. Yet the inherent interagency coordination requirements associated with security cooperation will necessitate organizational structure dedicated to accomplishing coordination tasks.

This is not a new role for combatant commanders as security cooperation and assistance, as it is currently practiced, dates back to post-World War II activities in Japan and Germany and further outlined in the “Truman Doctrine”. The Department of State has a majority of the legislative responsibilities for security assistance while DoD has the responsibility for executing a significant portion of the programs.¹⁶ The difference for AFRICOM will be the higher priority placed on these security cooperation tasks. As stated earlier, AFRICOM will “enhance a mutually supporting stable, secure, and prosperous African environment through sustained U.S. government engagement with African, national, and international partners,” with the conduct of military operations being a secondary task. The difference in the priority of tasks between AFRICOM and the other geographic combatant commanders is well documented in various sources to include direct quotes from the President, the Secretary of Defense, as well as the current

¹⁵ U.S. President, “Unified Command Plan,” 4.

¹⁶ Congress writes the laws and appropriates funds for security assistance. DoS provides direction and supervision for security assistance programs particularly in regards to size and type of programs for individual countries. DoD implements programs. (Defense Security Cooperation Agency. <http://www.dsca.mil>, accessed 9 Jan 2008.)

commander of AFRICOM.¹⁷ Because of this higher priority, AFRICOM will require greater integration of assigned interagency personnel.

Examination of UCP taskings specifically for geographic combatant commanders reveals the dual responsibilities that the GCCs have. The UCP adds the task to plan and conduct noncombatant evacuation and to command security assistance personnel in times of crisis that are not normally under military control. The UCP also tasks the GCCs with commanding forces, conducting humanitarian or operations, and “providing U.S. military representation to international and U.S. national agencies”.¹⁸ As AFRICOM assumes the full responsibilities as a GCC it will inherit this full range of tasks. From facts provided earlier in the President’s AFRICOM announcement speech, the priority and focus will be on AFRICOM’s support of the efforts of other government agencies and departments in missions other than traditional military war fighting tasks. Because of this, it is important to realize that the current GCC model for coordinating USG interagency efforts is insufficient for AFRICOM. This reality means that AFRICOM must develop innovative ways to solve the interagency coordination challenges.

Yet as AFRICOM organizes, the importance of U.S. interests and challenges to these interests in the Africa must be considered. The unique opportunity presented in the

¹⁷ The SEC DEF stated the following during presentation of the 2008 Defense Budget to Congress “This command will enable us to have a more effective and integrated approach...to oversee security cooperation, building partnership capability, defense support to non-military missions, and, if directed, military operations on the African continent.” <http://www.gbmnews.com/articles/1073/1/aTotal-Forcea-for-AFRICOM/Page1.html> (accessed February 21, 2008)

¹⁸ U.S. President, “Unified Command Plan,” 4-5.

establishment of AFRICOM necessitates careful examination of the environment it must operate in.

Chapter 4 U.S. Interests in Africa

An examination of U.S. interests in Africa is an important starting point in gaining a better understanding of what AFRICOM must be prepared to accomplish. The NSS for 2006 addresses U.S. interests both generally and specifically applicable to Africa. The U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development's Strategic Plan for FY2004 to FY2009¹, as well as the National Defense and National Military Strategy (2005) all echo these goals. In general terms USG interests in Africa can be divided into major two categories: regional stability and security, and combating terrorism. This is not to say that there are not USG interests outside these two categories but a review of applicable literature clearly demonstrates that these two are first and foremost. A panel of Africa experts commissioned by Congress in 2004 to examine U.S. interests in Africa determined that the five major issues shaping U.S. interests in were, oil, global trade, armed conflicts, HIV/AIDS, and terror.² Each of these fits into one of the two larger categories. The first four are related to regional stability and security and the last to combating terrorism. These will be a recurring theme throughout. Though related each of these elements is significant in and will be discussed as it applies to Africa. Once a fundamental understanding of the U.S. interests in Africa is established,

¹ The U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development's Strategic plan for FY2004 to FY2009 is a collaborative plan between the two independent agencies of the U.S. government. USAID executes its programs in accordance with Department of State policy guidance. Collaboration on a strategic plan acknowledges the unique relationship between USAID and the Department of State.

² Ploch, "Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa," 13-14.

analysis of the challenges to protecting our interests will produce a mission set that should drive AFRICOM organization and function.

Regional Stability and Security

Regional conflicts can arise from a wide variety of causes, including poor governance, external aggression, competing claims, internal revolt, tribal rivalries, and ethnic or religious hatreds. If left unaddressed, however, these different causes lead to the same ends: failed states, humanitarian disasters, and ungoverned areas that can become safe havens for terrorists.³

Maintaining regional stability and security is a key goal of the USG in Africa. There are many reasons for this, ranging from the basic advantage gained from stability as it pertains to the safety of U.S. citizens and protection of U.S. property and assets, to the economic benefits gained in a stable environment. Interestingly, safety of U.S. citizens and other humanitarian concerns have precipitated U.S. military interventions in Africa at least twenty two times since 1990. (Covert action, training exercises, and disaster assistance are not included in this number).⁴ “In fact, no region of the world has seen a greater number of foreign or U.S. military interventions in the past decade than

³ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 15.

⁴ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” Appendix B.

Sub-Saharan Africa.”⁵ This is one example of how U.S. interests in Africa translate into actions that the USG has had to undertake in order to protect them.

One of the key components in achieving regional stability and security in Africa is reducing the number of regional conflicts on the continent. For many reasons, including the fact that “regional conflicts do not stay isolated for long and often spread or devolve into humanitarian tragedy or anarchy,” dealing effectively with regional conflict in Africa is extremely important.⁶ Yet the ability to work with others to diffuse regional conflicts will be paramount to success in Africa. Historically the U.S. has undertaken programs such as the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) “to help African nations to respond to humanitarian crises and peacekeeping missions in their region. ACRI seeks to promote peace and stability on the continent and to help African nations to prevent more of the deadly conflicts which have plagued that continent.”⁷ More of this type of initiative, which was orchestrated by DoS and primarily executed by DoD, is needed. As the 2006 NSS acknowledges, “Outsiders generally cannot impose solutions on parties that are not ready to embrace them, but outsiders can sometimes help create the conditions under which the parties themselves can take effective action.”⁸

⁵ CATOIRE, “A CINC for Sub-Saharan Africa? Rethinking the Unified Command Plan,” 108.

⁶ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 14.

⁷ Department of State, “African Crisis Response Initiative” International Information Programs, <http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/af/acri/> (accessed December 28, 2007).

⁸ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 14.

The current administration has a three stage strategy or levels of engagement to deal with regional conflict. The strategy involves close coordination and cooperation between USG agencies and departments, primarily DoD and DoS. The strategy includes: conflict prevention and resolution; conflict intervention; and post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction.⁹ All three stages include some level of interagency cooperation in which the military might play a role.

In the conflict intervention role, DoD may very well find itself assisting other less professional militaries to develop their peacekeeping skills. These types of missions will often be coordinated with and at the request of organizations such as the United Nations or African Union, much like the African Crisis Response Initiative or its successor the Global Peace Operations Initiative. Additionally, as the NSS points out, “Military involvement may be necessary to stop a bloody conflict.”¹⁰ Close coordination between DoS and DoD will be critical, especially with the regional and local complexities associated with conflict intervention.¹¹

Perhaps the greatest level of coordination is required in the post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction phase. The NSS acknowledges that once a conflict is resolved, the difficult task of building effective internal security or police forces coupled with the associated legal systems is critical to maintaining a durable peace. Because of this, the Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization has been

⁹ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 15.

¹⁰ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 16.

¹¹ These complexities are addressed in some detail in Chapter 5 “The Operating Environment in Africa”.

established within the DoS “to plan and execute civilian stabilization and reconstruction efforts. The office draws on all agencies of the government and integrates its activities with our military’s efforts”.¹² In addition, the hard lessons learned in Iraq regarding the difficulty of stabilization and reconstruction is instructive. The synchronization of DoD and DoS efforts as executed by General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker on the ground in Iraq has resulted in marked improvement of U.S. and coalition efforts there. This model of having leaders from DoS and DoD working together to solve issues in the country of interest is one that AFRICOM must consider as it organizes for success in Africa.¹³

An important factor that makes regional stability a key goal is the protection of U.S. citizens abroad. At a very basic level, regional stability leads to a safer environment for U.S. citizens to live and work in. As such, it becomes imperative that the USG work with regional partners to limit regional conflict and to promote regional stability. As stated in the NSS “A government has no higher obligation than to protect the lives and livelihoods of its citizens.”¹⁴ This vital responsibility is echoed in the U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development’s Strategic Plan for FY2004 to

¹² U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 16.

¹³ The effectiveness of the current OIF model represented by the daily cooperation between General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker is worthy of a detailed study well beyond the scope of this thesis. However the guiding premise that empowered decision makers with local knowledge and daily interface, will be more effective than efforts coordinated distantly is one that I will come back to when discussing AFRICOM organization. However, as with all situations that require cooperation between different agencies or departments, personalities can impact effectiveness.

¹⁴ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 12.

FY2009, “Protecting and assisting American citizens abroad is among the oldest and most important responsibilities of the Department.”¹⁵ It is a given that AFRICOM will work in conjunction the DOS country teams in Africa to ensure the safety of American citizens. Because of the persistent instability in Africa, this will continue to be a task AFRICOM must be prepared to execute on a regular basis. Of the twenty two U.S. military interventions in Africa since 1990, sixteen were military operations specifically undertaken to ensure the protection and security of U.S. citizens.¹⁶ Currently, non-combatant evacuation planning is a shared responsibility between DoS and DoD. As the recently published joint publication regarding Noncombatant Evacuation Operations, Joint Publication 3-68 points out, “During NEOs the U.S. Ambassador, not the combatant commander (CCDR), is the senior United States Government (USG) authority for the evacuation and is ultimately responsible for the successful completion of the NEO and the safety of the evacuees.”¹⁷ By their nature, noncombatant evacuations can be very complex operations that come about as a result of quickly changing local situations compounded by the need for military assistance. As the joint publication also acknowledges, “subject to the overall authority of the ambassador, responsibility for the conduct of military operations in support of an evacuation and security of personnel,

¹⁵ Secretary of State, *U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development’s Strategic Plan for FY2004 to FY2009*, (Washington, DC, 2003): 18.

¹⁶ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” Appendix B.

¹⁷ Department of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3-68, Noncombatant Evacuation Operations*, (Washington , DC, 2007): ix.

equipment, and installations within the designated operational area is vested with the JFC.”¹⁸ To compound the challenges posed by this very important mission set, is the often confusing command and control at the tactical level.

The tactical situation and operational considerations involving an embassy in the midst of a NEO can quickly become a situation of strategic importance. It is possible for tactical forces conducting NEO to be functioning under separate chains of command. For example, DoS security personnel, Marine Security guards, and host nation security guards answer to the regional security officer who works for the Ambassador. On the other hand JTF personnel answer to the JTF commander and in fact do not take taskings from the Ambassador. As a result of these challenges, JP 3-68 emphasizes the importance of the Joint Force Commander and his staff coordinating the command and control and missions with the chief of mission prior to commencement of the operation.¹⁹ Depending on the location of the embassy, consulate, or diplomatic mission and the communications links and time available, working out the command and control relationships in the midst of a crisis can be problematic at best. Additionally, the geographic combatant commanders are responsible for a myriad of tasks associated the conduct of noncombatant evacuation operations. They must assist the ambassador and his country team in preparation of evacuation plans contained in the embassy’s emergency action plan. They review embassy emergency action plans and recommend

¹⁸ CJCS, *Joint Publication 3-68, Noncombatant Evacuation Operations*, x.

¹⁹ CJCS, *Joint Publication 3-68, Noncombatant Evacuation Operations*, xii.

corrective action to the Ambassador.²⁰ Determining lift requirements and coordinating for lift short-falls are two of the fourteen GCC specified tasks mentioned in the JP 3-68.²¹ Ultimately the complexity of noncombatant evacuations and the importance of being well prepared to execute provides impetus for AFRICOM to consider the security environment, assets available, and responsibilities when designing their organization.

Linked to regional stability and security is the issue of natural resources. The issue of resources is important in Africa. The fact that Africa is rich in natural resources is well known. These resources provide great hope for Africa, especially as it relates to economic growth and trade. Promoting free and fair trade is a key aspect of American policy as it leads to economic freedom. “Economic freedom empowers individuals, and empowered individuals increasingly demand greater political freedom. Greater economic freedom also leads to greater economic opportunity and prosperity for everyone”.²² It is this prosperity that the U.S. is interested in, a prosperity that will breed freedom and stability on the continent of Africa. “History has judged the market economy as the single most effective economic system and the greatest antidote to poverty. The United States promotes free and fair trade, open markets, a stable financial system, integration of the global economy....”²³ The compelling links between economic prosperity and

²⁰ This task is required for every embassy in the GCC’s area of responsibility. In the case of Africa, this includes forty nine embassies, consulates and missions. (source: JP 3-68 and DOS website <http://usembassy.state.gov/>, accessed on 5 Jan 2008)

²¹ CJCS, *Joint Publication 3-68, Noncombatant Evacuation Operations*, III-5 to III-7.

²² U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 25.

²³ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 25.

freedom provide hope for Africa. The enemy is regional instability, the absence of a secure environment, and all the associated challenges.

Additionally there is the practical aspect related to the resources in Africa as they apply to their impact on the U.S. and the greater global economy. Because of these factors U.S. interests in Africa are tied to the natural resources there. In addition to the obvious presence of oil in Africa, particularly in Nigeria, the region has an abundance of mineral wealth to include a significant part of the world's diamonds, gold, and chromium. Copper, bauxite, phosphate, uranium, tin, iron ore, cobalt, and titanium are also mined in significant quantities.²⁴ These additional resources are worth mentioning, yet as oil is the most important, the remaining discussion regarding resources will focus on oil.

One of the major reasons for increasing U.S. interest in the resources of Africa is the presence of oil, especially in West Africa. Recently Africa surpassed the Middle East in percentage of U.S. imports and is expected to provide up to one quarter of U.S. imports by 2015.²⁵ In addition, President Bush announced in his 2006 State of the Union Address his intention to “to replace more than 75 percent of our oil imports from the Middle East by 2025.”²⁶ Clearly, U.S. interest in African oil is significant. To suggest however that U.S. interests are simply limited to a ready and accessible supply of oil for domestic

²⁴ CATOIRE, “A CINC for Sub-Saharan Africa? Rethinking the Unified Command Plan,” 105.

²⁵ Sean McFate, “U.S Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm?” *Military Review*, (January-February 2008): 12.

²⁶ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” 13.

consumption would be to ignore the importance of African oil to the global economy. Perhaps the most powerful example of this is the fact that in 2003 Africa supplied just over 4% of the world's oil supply. This percentage grows every year and is expected to reach 20% sometime before 2010. Africa has doubled the amount of verifiable oil reserves in the last ten years.²⁷ Given the importance of oil to the global economy and the instability in the Middle East, Africa is in the enviable position of having extensive oil reserves. Yet the unanswered question remains, can Africa overcome the challenges that keep it from enjoying the prosperity that should result from the vast natural resources it possesses?

In summary, regional stability and security are major USG interests in Africa. Furthermore, as will become apparent in the operational environment section of this paper, the tremendous challenges facing USG efforts to assist in bringing stability and security to the continent are many.

Combating Terrorism

The United States is engaged in a war against terrorism that will be fought on many fronts over an extended period of time. In this war, we will make no concessions to terrorist demands and strike no deals. We will make no distinction between terrorists and those persons, organizations, or governments who aid or harbor them. No cause or

²⁷ Save the Children UK, "Natural resources in Africa - The Extractive Industries Submission to the African Commission," http://www.publishwhatyoupay.org/english/pdf/statements/scuk_cfa_0704.pdf (accessed 4 Jan 2008).

grievance justifies the use of terror. Terrorism by its very nature is antithetical to the world we seek to create.²⁸

“Defeating terrorism requires a long-term strategy and a break with old patterns. We are fighting a new enemy with global reach. The United States can no longer simply rely on deterrence to keep the terrorists at bay or defensive measures to thwart them at the moment. The fight must be taken to the enemy, to keep them on the run.”²⁹ And so begins the chapter of the 2006 National Security Strategy the deals with defeating global terrorism. In articulating the USG strategy for combating terrorism, President Bush boldly departs from the past policy of deterrence and reaction. Instead, he suggests that success in the USG’s war on terror will depend on proactive and pre-emptive strategies that focus on fighting terror at its source. The other aspect of the strategy that will be extremely important to USG efforts in Africa is the criticality of working with allies and regional partners in our efforts to combat terrorism. As the NSS acknowledges,

“To succeed in our own efforts, we need the support and concerted action of friends and allies. We must join with others to deny the terrorists what they need to survive: safe haven, financial support, and the support and protection that certain nation-states give them.”³⁰

While the last aspect of this strategy — state support of terrorism — is not a primary consideration in Africa, the long list of potential failed states in Africa must be taken into

²⁸ Secretary of State, *U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development’s Strategic Plan for FY2004 to FY2009*, 9.

²⁹ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 8.

³⁰ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 8.

account.³¹ One caveat is the country of Sudan in which Department of State and USAID are undertaking diplomatic efforts to convince Sudan to cease state support of terrorism.³²

More relevant in Africa is the large amount of ungoverned space as demonstrated by the map below. The red shaded area demonstrates area that is considered ungoverned.



33

This type of ungoverned space prompted U.S. action in Afghanistan in 2001, as it provided sanctuary for Al-Qaida to plan and prepare for terror operations. It also is the impetus for U.S. efforts to work with the Government of Pakistan to solve the problem

³¹ Details regarding potential failed states in Africa will be discussed in detail in the assessment of the operational environment in chapter 5.

³² Secretary of State, *U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development's Strategic Plan for FY2004 to FY2009*, 8.

³³ Map designed by Theresa Whelan, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, downloaded from <http://cominganarchy.com/2006/03/13/mapping-the-gap-part-iii-by-chirol/> (accessed on 2 Feb 2002).

presented in the ungoverned regions of Pakistan.³⁴ The challenge in Africa is considerable when the safe-haven provided by ungoverned areas is combined with the fact that terrorist groups are increasingly relying on decentralized planning and execution. Terrorist operations by dispersed cells of ideologically linked individuals make the problem even more daunting; primarily from a targeting stand point. It is this combination of ungoverned areas and dispersed terrorist command and control that must be countered.

The counter-terrorism strategy as presented in the NSS acknowledges that solving the problem will require long-term solutions to a wide variety of challenges. Yet at the same time it points out that short-term action must be undertaken to provide breathing-space for some of the longer term actions to have an effect. As a result “the hard core of the terrorists cannot be deterred or reformed; they must be tracked down, killed, or captured. They must be cut off from the network of individuals and institutions on which they depend for support.”³⁵

But as mentioned earlier, these hard core terrorist require a sea to swim in as Mao Tse-tung would say. Therefore, as important as it to kill or capture radical terrorists, denying them a sea in which to swim, to build operational capability, and to plan is equally if not more important. As the NSS dictates, “we must prevent terrorists from

³⁴ The Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) in western Pakistan is a terrorist safe haven and known staging base for terrorist operations world-wide. In the case of the FATA the challenge is one of access. The remote and mountainous terrain combined with sympathetic inhabitants, pose significant obstacles to countering the efforts of the terrorists.

³⁵ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 12.

exploiting ungoverned areas. America will lead in this fight, and we will continue to partner with allies and will recruit new friends to join the battle.”³⁶ Although operations in Iraq and Afghanistan overshadow those in the rest of the world, the importance of Africa in the global war on terror cannot be overlooked. As shown in the following chapter on the operational environment, Africa is rife with both opportunity and challenges regarding America’s fight against terrorism.

The United States has a variety of national interests in Africa. The Congressional Research Service Report, “*Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa*,” December 7, 2007 lists the U.S. strategic interests in Africa as, Oil and Global Trade, Maritime Security, Armed Conflicts, Terror, and HIV/AIDS.³⁷ All of these fit into the larger categories of regional security and stability and combating terrorism. With U.S interests in mind, an assessment of the operational environment in Africa is crucial to determining the types tasks AFRICOM must organize to accomplish.

³⁶ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 12.

³⁷ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” 1.

Chapter 5 Operating Environment

I once had a conversation with the governor of a remote part of Namibia, where a minor uprising had just been put down with energetic brutality. Several hundred people had been tortured then released without charge, presumably because they were innocent. Asked whether he was sorry that the innocent people had been tortured, the governor told me his only regret was that he had not been able to take part in the beatings himself. I could not think of anymore questions after that.¹

With the USG goals and interests in mind, an examination of the environment in Africa, specifically the aspects of the environment that challenge our interests and goals, is an important next step in determining AFRICOM's focus and structure. In assessing the environment in Africa, the concentration will be on the major areas in which DoD might be expected to have a role. For instance, agricultural development and financial reform are important aspects of U.S. activities in Africa, yet DoD does not play a significant role in these functions. This assessment will focus on the following major factors:

- Demographics and culture
- Instability: Disease, Regional Conflict and Local Conflict
- Failed/failing states
- Terrorism

¹ Robert Guest, *The Shackled Continent: Power, Corruption and African Lives* (Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2004), 2.

Each of these poses a significant challenge to U.S. interests in Africa. In working to solve these issues, AFRICOM can prioritize its efforts and make organization decisions to better posture to meet these challenges.

Demographics and Culture

Demographics and culture alone provide a significant challenge to U.S. interests in Africa. To begin with, the sheer vastness of the country is worth mentioning. Africa is the second largest continent in the world, only to Asia is larger. In addition, it is the second most populous with over 14% of the world's population.² Within this context there is also a wide diversity of culture. The Sahara Desert divides the continent into to large sub-regions often referred to as North Africa and Sub-Sahara Africa. North Africa is less populous and tends to have strong religious and cultural ties to the Arab culture and the Middle East. "Islam is the predominant religion. In most respects, North Africa is more a part of the Arab Middle East or Mediterranean Basin than of Sub-Saharan Africa."³ In effect, the Sahara divides the continent both geographically and culturally.

The great diversity of Sub-Sahara Africa adds to the complexity of the environment in which AFRICOM will operate. Many different types of factors divide Sub-Sahara Africa including nationality, ethnicity, language, economy, and religion. "The environment of Sub-Saharan Africa may be the most complex on earth. Sub-Saharan Africa's population is diverse, comprising 3,000 indigenous ethnic groups

² Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, "List of Continents by Population"
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africa> (accessed 8 Jan 2008).

³ CATOIRE, "A CINC for Sub-Saharan Africa? Rethinking the Unified Command Plan," 105.

speaking over 1,000 different local languages.”⁴ To further add complexity, Africa is composed of 53 different countries, all with their unique set of challenges.

A detailed analysis of the complexity of Africa is beyond the scope of this thesis. But to ignore the challenges posed by the cultural diversity and vastness of its territory would underestimate the problems AFRICOM will face as the regional representative of the U.S. Government.

Instability in Africa

Africa is a continent of growing economic, social, political, and geostrategic importance. It is also a continent of overwhelming poverty, rampant disease, chronic instability, and terrorist activity.⁵

The instability in Africa is apparent to even the casual internet surfer or cable news browser. Though it may not be apparent, this instability has potential impact on U.S. national security. As a Congressional Research Service report on Africa points out, “the large ungoverned area in Africa, HIV/AIDS epidemic, corruption, weak governance, and poverty that exist throughout the continent are challenges that are key factors in the

⁴ CATOIRE, “A CINC for Sub-Saharan Africa? Rethinking the Unified Command Plan,” 105.

⁵ Robert G. Berschinski, “AFRICOM’S Dilemma: The Global War on Terrorism, Capacity Building, Humanitarianism, and the Future of U.S. Security Policy in Africa”. November 2007, <http://www.StrategicStudiesInstitute.army.mil/> (accessed 14 Dec 2007).

security and stability issues that affect every country in Africa.”⁶ It also mentions that instability “also heightens human suffering and retards economic development, which may in turn threaten U.S. economic interests.”⁷ In addition to the general acknowledgement that instability is counterproductive and harmful to economic development, there are very powerful examples of how instability can affect security. One recent example pertains to the country of Nigeria. As mentioned earlier, Nigeria is the fifth largest provider of oil to the United States. Historically, “instability in the country (Nigeria) has reduced output by as much as 25%. World oil prices rose above \$60 per barrel in Apr 2007 after the country held disputed national elections and above \$70 per barrel in May 2007 after attacks on pipelines in the Delta.”⁸

With all this in mind, there are three major sources of instability in Africa that might require DoD support to overcome or at least contain. The first of these is the HIV/AIDS⁹ epidemic and associated impacts. While this may not seem as if it is a likely problem that would require DoD support, as the facts will show, very little progress will be made in Africa on any problem set without dealing with the devastating HIV/AIDS epidemic. The second source of instability discussed will be local conflict, local being

⁶ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” 2.

⁷ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” Summary.

⁸ McFate, “U.S Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm” 12.

⁹ HIV/AIDS is representative of a wider problem with disease in Africa. Malaria and HIV induced tuberculosis are also a significant problem with over 90% of the world wide malaria cases infections occurring in Africa. (Robert Guest, Shackled Continent) HIV/AIDS is detailed herein as it is the most devastating of the Africa’s disease problem.

defined as conflict within the borders of a specific country. The third source is regional conflict, involving two or more countries.

HIV/AIDS and Associated Challenges

Of the 20 poorest nations of the world, 18 are located in Sub-Saharan Africa. Of all the world's peoples, Africans have the least chance to survive five years, or to live to 50. Africa has the highest infant mortality rates and highest death rates in the world, reflecting its poor health care, sanitation, and diets. Life expectancy is the lowest in the world and forecast to decrease dramatically due to the HIV/AIDS epidemic throughout large areas of the sub-continent: Africa accounts for more than two-thirds of the world's HIV cases.¹⁰

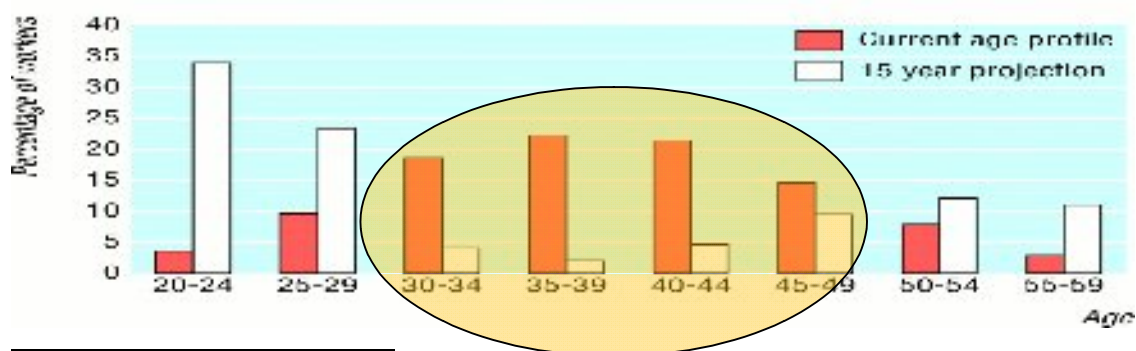
Worldwide, over 42 million people are infected with HIV/AIDS and although Africa has but 14% of the world's population it has over 60% of the world's HIV/AIDS positive people. "A new infection occurs every 6 seconds. The pandemic threatens the social fabric in the most severely afflicted countries, most of which are in sub-Saharan Africa."¹¹ It may be easy to overlook the impact of these infection rates in a macro view, but the reality on the ground is often strikingly tragic. Several excellent examples are mentioned in Robert Guest's *"The Shackled Continent: Power, Corruption, and African Lives,"* help to illustrate the point. The first involves studies of the impact of HIV/AIDS in Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. In these countries, HIV/AIDS infected families spend 50% less on education and four times as much on health care

¹⁰ CATOIRE, "A CINC for Sub-Saharan Africa? Rethinking the Unified Command Plan," 105.

¹¹ Secretary of State, *U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development's Strategic Plan for FY2004 to FY2009*, 24.

compared to families unaffected by the disease. Forced to care for sick husbands, women are only 40% as productive in farming their land. In Zimbabwe production from communal lands dropped over 50% in five years due to rampant HIV/AIDS sickness and death. In Zambia health experts have predicted that up to half of the nation's population could die of HIV/AIDS. There is also an unseen cost that relates to tribal culture and care for the elderly. Generally the expectation of the elderly is that their children will care for them as they grow older. Yet HIV/AIDS is devastating middle-aged caregivers resulting in a dual impact. The elderly have no caregiver in their old age and often find themselves with the additional task of caring for orphaned grandchildren.¹²

While a complete discussion of how HIV/AIDS and disease breeds instability in Africa is beyond the scope of this thesis, understanding the impact is critical to gaining a full appreciation of the operational environment. Perhaps the best way to illustrate the impact is demonstrated in the chart below. The chart represents the findings of a recent study conducted in South Africa regarding projections of available working age males over a 15 year period.¹³



¹² Guest, *Shackled*, 96.

¹³ Simon Dixon, Scott McDonald, Jennifer Roberts "The Impact of HIV and AIDS on Africa's Economic Development." *British Medical Journal*, January 26, 2002, <http://www.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/324/7331/232> (accessed 12 Jan 2008).

Most disconcerting is the roughly 400% reduction in the male population ages 30-44 over the 15-year period highlighted above. It is this age group that will not be available to the workforce, military, or internal security forces of South Africa. To fully appreciate the implications of this it is important to keep in mind that the HIV/AIDS infection rates in South Africa are much less than some countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. For example, South African infection rates are little more than half the rate of some countries such as Botswana and Swaziland where the infection rates approach 40% of the adult population.¹⁴ When viewed in this light it is easy to see the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁵

Regardless of the other missions that AFRICOM assumes, support of USG efforts to combat HIV/AIDS and disease, in general, must be considered as a major task. Providing transportation, logistics, and security to other departments and agencies of the USG are a few of the tasks that AFRICOM might be called upon to execute. Furthermore, because of the widespread occurrence and impact of HIV/AIDS it will be a major planning consideration in most operations.

¹⁴ Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, "List of Continents by HIV/AIDS Prevalence Rates," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_HIV/AIDS_adult_prevalence_rate (accessed 8 Jan 2008).

¹⁵ The HIV/AIDS epidemic is primarily a problem in Sub-Saharan Africa. While there are HIV infections in North Africa, they average between 0.10% and 0.3% as compared to 10-40% in Sub-Saharan Africa. (CIA World Fact Book, Rank Order - HIV/AIDS - adult prevalence rate, Updated Feb 12, 2008, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2155rank.html>, (accessed February 22, 2008).

Local and Regional conflict

*Internal conflict causes tremendous human suffering with a disproportionate share of the costs falling on civilian victims. In today's wars, civilians are nine times more likely to be killed than combatants. By the year 2000, internal conflict and repression had generated 14.5 million asylum seekers worldwide and nearly 25 million persons were displaced within their own countries.*¹⁶

Conflict is an everyday reality in Africa. From post election violence in Kenya experienced in early 2008 to the simmering conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea, Africa continues to be the most unstable continent in the world. Regardless of the scope, conflict is an African reality that AFRICOM will be forced to deal with. “As problems in Iraq have shown, if there is a single lesson to be learned it is that security is a precondition of development. This axiom should play a central role in formulating a new security strategy for Africa, the most underdeveloped continent on earth.”¹⁷ Dealing with under-development should not be a mission that AFRICOM should assume, other USG departments and agencies have this task. However, breaking the linkage between conflict, the resulting lack of security, and the impact on development will certainly drive mission sets for AFRICOM.

In addition to the challenge of under-development in Africa, there are also the humanitarian crises that often result from conflict. As the 2006 NSS states, “Regional

¹⁶ U.S. Agency for International Development, “*Conducting a Conflict Assessment: A Framework for Strategy and Program Development*, (Washington DC, 2005): 7.

¹⁷ McFate, “U.S Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm” 15.

conflicts do not stay isolated for long and often spread or devolve into humanitarian tragedy or anarchy. This means that even if the United States does not have a direct stake in a particular conflict, our interests are likely to be affected over time.”¹⁸ While these humanitarian crises will rarely if ever pose a direct threat to U.S. national security, the NSS points out the U.S. national interests are likely to be affected.

In some cases however, conflict might pose a more direct threat to U.S. National security. As discussed earlier, Africa is becoming an important source of energy for the U.S. The ongoing local conflict in the Nigeria poses a direct and significant threat to U.S. strategic interests, specifically energy security. As the U.S. looks to decrease its dependence on oil from the Middle East, Sub-Sahara Africa, which currently provides roughly 18% of U.S. oil imports, is expected to provide up to 25% by 2015.¹⁹ When viewed in the context of current instability in the Middle East and growing tension between the U.S. and Venezuela, the importance of African oil becomes even more apparent. The local conflict in Nigeria, therefore, becomes important to the U.S. government and as a result to AFRICOM.

Conflict has many faces in Africa. Because of this, dividing conflict into local and regional subcategories simplifies analysis. Division of conflict into the sub-categories of local and regional allows for separate analysis as the causes and more importantly the solutions, are often quite different.

¹⁸ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 14.

¹⁹ McFate, “U.S Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm” 12.

Local Conflict

Local conflict is one type of conflict that creates instability and its attendant results. For consistency, local conflict is defined as those within the confines of one country. Local conflicts are the most prevalent type of conflict in Africa. Africa is not known for a history of nation on nation wars. Instead conflict widely springs from armed resistance by opposition groups. There are several typical factors that motivate opposition groups. Local control and exploitation of natural resources, criminal activity, and religious conflict are but a few examples of the root causes of conflict. “For example, the largest threat to Liberian security is not a Sierra Leonean blitzkrieg across its border, but internal: guerilla warfare, insurgency, *coup d’etat*, or terrorism.”²⁰ Because local conflicts are so prevalent in Africa, a short analysis of two, Nigeria and Somalia, provides insight into the challenges that AFRICOM will face in dealing with this major source of instability.

Perhaps the most notable local conflict is the ongoing crisis in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. As the most recent Annual Threat Assessment from the Director of National Intelligence points out, “Persistent insecurity in Nigeria’s oil producing region, the Niger Delta, poses a direct threat to U.S. strategic interests in sub-Saharan Africa.”²¹ As mentioned earlier, conflict in the Nigeria has historically had a significant impact on

²⁰ McFate, “U.S Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm,” 15.

²¹ Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Annual Threat Assessment of the Director of National Intelligence for the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (February 5, 2008)*, SSCI ATA Feb 2008–DNI Statement for the Record (Washington, DC 2008).

oil production. Therefore understanding the nature of this conflict is critical to developing solutions. Despite the efforts of the Government of Nigeria to resolve the conflict, problems persist. The people of Nigeria have a general distrust of the government as result of years of corruption and mismanagement. Distrust translates to lack of support for government efforts. Meanwhile armed resistance groups kidnap foreign oil workers, sabotage oil infrastructure, and steal oil. These same armed elements enjoy the protection and support of corrupt government officials and in some case rouge elements of the Nigerian military. Even when it makes an attempt to control the violent groups, the government often “lacks the capacity and resources to police sprawling infrastructure in its swampy terrain. The military could provoke even more unrest if it went on the offensive against the armed groups. As a result, Nigeria’s overall political stability remains fragile.”²² Many of these challenges are specific to Nigeria and take on a decidedly local character. Because of this, gaining a deep understanding of the conflict factors and delivery of consistent and tailored assistance is key success.

Another example of local conflict is in Somalia. Since the overthrow of Mohammed Siad Barre in January of 1991, Somalia has been in almost constant turmoil. Since the overthrow, Somalia has fragmented into three general areas of loose self-governance, Somaliland, Puntland, and South West Somalia. These sub-regions experience further division along clan and militia lines. Everyday Somalia is subject to chaos, anarchy, brutality, bloodshed, and outright barbarism. This is particularly troubling as “Somalia is the only political society on the continent which is a nation in the

²² DNI, Annual Threat Assessment.

real sense of the word because of ethnic, religious, and cultural homogeneity of her people, but yet, she is atomized across the fault line of clan”.²³ Although some of the same problems that exist in Nigeria are present in Somalia, the root causes are decidedly different. Where criminal activity is a primary motivating factor in Nigeria, clan violence is the primary source of strife in Somalia. Comparison of U.S. interests in the two countries also provides a contrast. As previously discussed, access to oil is a primary motivation driving U.S. desire for stability in Nigeria. U.S. primary interests in Somalia are tied to the Global War on Terror. As Department of State spokesman Sean McCormack articulated, the United States would "work with responsible individuals . . . in fighting terror. It's a real concern of ours -- terror taking root in the Horn of Africa. We don't want to see another safe haven for terrorists created. Our interest is purely in seeing Somalia achieve a better day."²⁴ The most striking difference between the two local conflicts is the simple factor of access. While U.S. access to Nigeria is relatively easy, in Somalia it is much more difficult to gain legitimate, overt access to achieve goals. As a result of these differences, U.S. approach to conflict resolution in each of the countries will require solutions tied to the operational environment.

²³ Okechukwu Emeh, "Africa and the Crisis of Instability", *Global Policy Forum*, March 30, 2004, <http://www.globalpolicy.org/nations/sovereign/failed/2004/0330crisis.htm>, (Accessed 26 Dec 2007).

²⁴ Emily Wax and Karen DeYoung, "U.S. Secretly Backing Warlords in Somalia," *Washington Post.Com*, May 17, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/05/16/AR2006051601625.html> (accessed January 2, 2008).

Regional Conflicts

Although not as ubiquitous as local conflicts, regional conflicts remain a source of instability in Africa. Despite a decrease in the number of regional conflicts over recent years, Africa is still home to a majority of the UN peacekeeping missions in the world. There are currently seven ongoing UN missions in Africa including, United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS), United Nations Operation in Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI), United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en République démocratique du Congo (MONUC, Dem. Rep. Of Congo), United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE), Mission des Nations unies pour l'Organisation d'un Référendum au Sahara Occidental (MINURSO, Western Sahara), and United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT)²⁵ There is also a UN and African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). Because regional stability is a U.S. interest in Africa, success of these peacekeeping missions is important.

While one of the key concepts in the U.S. approach is to enable African countries to solve African problems, challenges remain. Many African countries are willing to provide forces for these peacekeeping missions. But despite their willingness to participate, many of the military units face shortcomings in logistics, command and control, and training. Fortunately the international community, including the United States, recognizes the cost-effectiveness of enhancing indigenous capability. To date, the

²⁵ Ploch, "Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa," 15.

Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI),²⁶ started by President Bush, currently has 19 African countries participating. Over 11,000 troops have been trained. The program also provides assistance to the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS).²⁷ The importance of enabling these groups is apparent and the concept is mentioned specifically in the NSS. In devoting an entire NSS chapter to this concept, President Bush articulates the importance of working with African Nations to help them solve problems. The NSS states that “We are committed to working with African nations to strengthen their domestic capabilities and the regional capacity of the AU to support post-conflict transformations... and improve peacekeeping.”²⁸ AFRICOM will be an important facilitator of GPOI and must be properly postured to work closely with the Department of State, the lead federal agency for security assistance.

AFRICOM will face a myriad of challenges regarding regional conflict in Africa. Analysis of a current regional conflict in Darfur helps to better understand the complexity of the problems created by regional conflict. Although much of the conflict is confined to Sudan, the refugee problem affects surrounding countries, particularly Chad and Libya.

²⁶ GPOI is the successor of President Clinton’s African Crisis Response Initiative. The African Component of this world-wide program is known as the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance Program or ACOTA.

²⁷ Nina Serafino, “The Global Peace Operations Initiative: Background and Issues for Congress,” *CRS Report for Congress*, (June 11, 2007): 8.

²⁸ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 37-38.

The current crisis in Darfur traces its origin back to early 2003 with emergence of the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in challenge to the National Islamic Front (NIF) government in Darfur. Their major claim is that the government of Sudan, dominated by Arabs, discriminates against African ethnic groups. Like many conflicts in Africa, the Darfur crisis is rooted in ethnic and tribal fighting. Adding to the complexity is the fact that “periodic tensions between the largely African-Muslim ethnic groups and the Arab inhabitants of Darfur can be traced to the 1930s and most recently surfaced in the 1980s.” The Government of Sudan has done little to rectify the problem and as a result, Arab militias roam freely attacking ethnic Africans.²⁹

Despite the efforts of the UN and African Union, the crisis continues. Although the SLA and JEM have fractured some, they continue to offer enough resistance to keep the crisis stirred up. The two primary motivations are material gain and lack of trust in the central government in Khartoum. To further add to the complexity, is a desire on the part of the central government in Khartoum to prolong the crisis to keep an organized opposition from rising up in the south that might influence the elections scheduled for 2009. Additionally, the National Congress Party (NCP), the current party in power in Khartoum, continues to ignore key provisions in the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The current crisis is a result of this and the actions of the NCP are meant to “ensure its survival in 2009 elections, not end the conflict, and they are

²⁹ International Crisis Group, “Crisis in Darfur,” International Crisis Group, <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=3060&l=1&gclid=CPKFxOuJ7JECFQRxHgodmBXvpA> (accessed 2 Feb 2008).

jeopardizing Sudan's peacemaking architecture."³⁰ The consequences of this are tragic. As the recent Annual Threat Assessment states, "2.2 million Darfurians remain displaced. Sudan's North-South peace agreement is in danger of collapse because of mounting Southern frustration with the North's failure to honor core provisions on power and revenue sharing, military redeployments, and border demarcation."³¹

Ultimately, the crisis in Sudan provides several challenges to U.S. strategic interests. First of all is the challenge it presents to the U.S. philosophy of dealing with regional conflict in Africa. Failure of the efforts of the African Union and United Nations is a failure of U.S. strategy. For U.S. strategy to remain viable, the AU must be a viable stabilizing force. Sadly, "violence is again increasing, access for humanitarian agencies is decreasing, international peacekeeping is not yet effective and a political settlement remains far off. The strategy the African Union (AU)/UN mediation has been following cannot cope."³²

The second challenge will be the condemning echo of past criticism of U.S. policy in Africa. The U.S. cannot remain passive in its efforts to help solve the Darfur crisis. This is especially critical as AFRICOM seeks to gain credibility as a U.S. command which is designed to help bring peace, stability, and prosperity to Africa. Failure to help solve the Darfur crisis exposes the U.S. to the criticism being heard all over Africa and the U.S. regarding the "true" mission of AFRICOM. Many in Africa and

³⁰ International Crisis Group, "Crisis in Darfur".

³¹ DNI, *Annual Threat Assessment*.

³² International Crisis Group, "Crisis in Darfur".

the U.S. posit that the real purpose of AFRICOM is militarization of policy and support in order to exploit Africa's vast natural resources.³³ Because of this factor, AFRICOM and the USG must work hard to change this perception. Darfur is a regional conflict that the U.S. and consequently AFRICOM cannot ignore.

Regional conflict is not unique to Sudan. Constant tension exists in the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. According to the Feb 2008 Annual Threat Assessment from the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, "tensions between longtime enemies Ethiopia and Eritrea have increased over the past year, with both sides seemingly preparing for a new war. The last war killed about 80,000 soldiers on both sides."³⁴ The assessment goes on to say that if the conflict resumes and Ethiopia performs poorly, President Meles' government could be in jeopardy, which would lead to instability in the Horn of Africa. Also worth noting is the fact that the African Union is based in Ethiopia. Ultimately stability in Africa is a national interest of the United States. As a result, AFRICOM must be prepared to work with other USG agencies and departments as well as African partner nations to diffuse conflict before it begins, intervene to end conflict, and to assist in post-conflict efforts.

³³ Danny Glover's 11 November 2007 article in *The Nation* titled, "Say No to AFRICOM" and any number daily blogs on the subject demonstrate the tremendous amount of skepticism regarding AFRICOM real purpose.

³⁴ DNI, *Annual Threat Assessment*.

Failed and Failing States

“The United States recognizes that our security depends upon partnering with Africans to strengthen fragile and failing states and bring ungoverned areas under the control of effective democracies.”³⁵

Another challenge posed by the operational environment in Africa is the high number of failed and failing states. As pointed out in the 2002 NSS, “America is now threatened less by conquering states than we are by failing ones.”³⁶ The Congressional Research Service report on failed and failing states dated 15 November 2007, points out how serious this issue is in Africa. Two statistics in particular are particularly illustrative. The first involves the World Bank’s 2007 assessment of fragile states. Of the 34 countries world-wide that appear on the list of fragile states, 22 are African.³⁷ Perhaps even more telling is the Fund for Peace Failed States index which rank orders the 32 states most likely to fail. Eighteen of the states listed are African as well as six of the top seven. The only non-African state in the top seven is Iraq at number two following Sudan.³⁸ This clearly establishes the fact that failed and failing states is a real problem in Africa.

³⁵ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 37.

³⁶ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” 5.

³⁷ Liana Sun Wyler, “Weak and Failing States: Evolving Security Threats and U.S. Policy,” *CRS Report for Congress* (November 15, 2007): 22.

³⁸ Wyler, “Weak and Failing States: Evolving Security Threats and U.S. Policy,” 24.

Fully understanding why failing and failed states are a problem for AFRICOM requires gaining insight into the specific challenges posed by them. At the macro level, failed and failing states result in instability in the region. Because regional stability is a U.S. interest in Africa, as detailed in Chapter 4, AFRICOM must work with African nations and other USG departments and agencies to combat instability. While there are a myriad of tasks presented by this mission set, such as promoting economic growth, combating disease, and establishing the primacy of the rule of law, there are several that are inherently military in nature that AFRICOM will find itself involved in. Most involve the large ungoverned areas present in failed and failing states. Previous examples from the countries of Nigeria, Somalia, and Sudan illustrate the point.

Ungoverned areas often provide a safe haven for internal opposition groups. Nigeria, one of the 22 African States on the World Bank list of fragile states and number 17 on the Failed States Index, possesses large areas of ungoverned space. As previously mentioned, the swampy Niger Delta is particularly problematic, providing criminally motivated opposition groups a safe haven from which to operate. Getting at these isolated areas proves difficult for the government's security forces. This problem is not unique to Nigeria. "African conflicts have sprung mostly from domestic armed opposition groups. Such groups find it easier to change governments through violence rather than through the legitimate means of democracy, given the... expanses of ungoverned territory in which to find sanctuary."³⁹ In seeking to solve the overarching problems created by the instability of failed or failing states, AFRICOM must be

³⁹ McFate, "U.S Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm" 15.

prepared to assist partner nations to bring ungoverned areas under effective government control. In some cases this assistance may be transportation, air or ground, to support efforts to provide humanitarian relief. Support to the UN and the African Union in Darfur is an example. In other cases it might be a combination of training, command and control support, and air mobility. Assisting the government of Nigeria in combating internal criminal elements in the Niger Delta is an example.⁴⁰

Ungoverned areas provide a breeding ground for instability and humanitarian crisis. This is particularly true, but not unique to the Darfur region of Sudan. Much of the strife and resulting refugee problems can be attributed to the ongoing conflict between armed opposition groups manned by ethnic Africans and government supported Arab militias. Conservative estimates number displaced persons at over one million, some estimates are double this. In addition a recent congressional research service paper reports that the level of killing in Darfur is extremely troubling, with some estimates of 10,000-30,000 deaths per year.⁴¹ While U.S. troops on the ground would most likely prove counter-productive, U.S. support in the form of rotary wing lift and command and control would be monumental. As former U.S. Ambassador to Rwanda and the Central African Republic states,

“most dramatic would be the provision of U.S. helicopters to UNAMIS, the UN peacekeeping operation in Sudan. The UN seeks a squadron of several dozen choppers: most for

⁴⁰ Additional examples directly applicable to counter terrorism appear in the next section titled “Terrorism”

⁴¹ Ted Dagne, “Sudan: The Crisis in Darfur,” *CRS Report for Congress*, (June 16, 2004): 1.

lift, but including several gunships. Efforts to find helicopters have so far come up void. A U.S. offer of such support would indeed reinforce our intent to help Africa.”⁴²

In addition and as noted earlier, many of the U.S.’ African partners lack the equipment and command and control to execute complex peace keeping operations. UNAMIS is an example of a peace-keeping mission that AFRICOM could bring U.S. military capability to bear on a problem that has world attention.

Ungoverned areas also provide a safe haven for terrorist groups. According to Sean McFate, expert on African security policy, “From the U.S. perspective, the inability or unwillingness of some fragile states to govern territory within their borders can lead to the creation of safe-havens for terrorist organizations.”⁴³ One of the best examples of the link between terrorism and the failed or failing state is Somalia. The embassy bombings in Dar es Salaam Tanzania and Nairobi Kenya in 1998 were both planned and executed from the safe haven Al Qaeda terrorists enjoy in Somalia. So strong is the link between terrorism and the ungoverned expanse of Somalia, terrorist operations and activities in Somalia are grouped under the title of al-Qaeda in East Africa (AQEA).

⁴² Robert E. Gribbin, “Implementing AFRICOM,” *American Diplomacy.org*, February 12, 2008, http://www.unc.edu/depts/diplomat/item/2008/0103/grib/gribbin_africom.html (accessed February 13, 2008).

⁴³ McFate, “U.S Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm,” 12.

Safe haven is not the only challenge that failed states pose to U.S. efforts to combat terrorism. Intelligence reports suggest that al-Qaeda benefitted from the disintegration of the governments of Sierra Leone and Liberia in the 1990s. “Reports suggest that al Qaeda used the proceeds from its conflict diamond trade as a funding source for its operations. State Department officials have identified failed states such as these as an acute risk to U.S. national security.”⁴⁴ As a result of the high number of potential failed states in Africa and their potential link to terrorism, AFRICOM must be prepared to deal with this factor.

Terrorism

“The United States can no longer simply rely on deterrence to keep the terrorists at bay or defensive measures to thwart them at the last moment. The fight must be taken to the enemy, to keep them on the run.”⁴⁵

Combating terrorism will be an important mission for AFRICOM. There is overwhelming evidence that Africa is both a safe haven and training base for terrorists. Yet as the embassy attacks in 1998, the 2003 attacks in Mombasa, and recent attacks in Algerian and Morocco demonstrate, Africa is also target for terrorist attacks.

Perhaps the most pressing challenge for AFRICOM and its African partner nations is the threat posed by al-Qaeda in the Lands of Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). As the

⁴⁴ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” 16

⁴⁵ U.S. President, “NSS 2006,” 8.

most active terrorist group in North Africa, AQIM presents a significant threat to U.S. interests in the region. The 2007 attempted homicide bombing of the U.S. consulate in Morocco is an example of this. Previous to its merger with al-Qaeda in September 2006, AQIM primarily focused on attacking Algerian Government targets. Even more troubling is the November 2007 merger with the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). Just as troubling is the “improvement in AQIM’s use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) which suggests the group is acquiring knowledge transmitted from extremists in Iraq”.⁴⁶ AQIM’s base of operations is Algeria and northern Mali with small groups of recruits coming from Nigeria, Mauritania, Libya, Tunisia, and Morocco.⁴⁷ This makes AQIM a regional threat requiring a regional solution.

One safe assumption is that AFRICOM will assume responsibilities of Operation Enduring Freedom - Trans Sahara.⁴⁸ Implemented by European Command, the program involves working with African partners from Algeria, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, and Tunisia to “improve intelligence, command and control, logistics, and border control, and to execute joint operations against terrorist groups.”⁴⁹ OEF-Trans Sahara is the military component of a larger Department of State program.

⁴⁶ DNI, *Annual Threat Assessment*.

⁴⁷ DNI, *Annual Threat Assessment*.

⁴⁸ OEF is comprised of five regional missions; Operation Enduring Freedom - Afghanistan (OEF-A), Operation Enduring Freedom - Caribbean and Central America (OEF-CCA), Operation Enduring Freedom - Philippines (OEF-P), Operation Enduring Freedom - Horn of Africa (OEF-HOA), and Operation Enduring Freedom - Trans Sahara (OEF-TS)

⁴⁹ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” 21.

Known as the Counter-Terrorism Partnership, the overall goal is “aimed at defeating terrorist organizations by strengthening regional counterterrorism capabilities, enhancing and institutionalizing cooperation among the region’s security forces...and reinforcing bilateral military ties with the United States”.⁵⁰ The military role in this program is extremely important and one that AFRICOM’s significant interagency composition will ensure continued emphasis and success.

Yet despite the emphasis on regional solutions to combat terrorism and other problems in Africa, America must be prepared to act unilaterally to kill or capture high value targets when it is in the nation’s interest. Early on the morning of 3 March 2008, the U.S launched a Tomahawk missile attack on a house in the town of Doble in southern Somalia. The target of the submarine-launched missile attack was reported to be Hassan Turki, the head of the radical Shebab youth organization. Turki was reportedly attending a meeting with other militant Islamists. "This attack was against a known al-Qaeda terrorist," said Bryan Whitman, a Pentagon spokesman. "As we have repeatedly said, we will continue to pursue terrorist activities and their operations wherever we may find them."⁵¹ The U.S. must maintain this capability to strike unilaterally if it is to be effective in the War on Terror.

⁵⁰ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” 21.

⁵¹ Mike Pflanz, “American Attack Targets al-Qaeda in Somalia,” *Telegraph.co.uk*, April 3, 2008, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2008/03/04/wsomalia104.xml>, (accessed April 3, 2008).

There is an informative aspect of this mission that applies to AFRICOM. Under the current Unified Command Plan, Somalia is a part of CENTCOM's area of responsibility. Because of this, it was the robust and battle-hardened staff of DoD's largest combatant command that coordinated and executed this strike. The coordination challenges such as Tomahawk missile firing timelines, collateral damage assessment, intelligence fusion, and national approval, are all tasks that CENTCOM has developed and honed in six years of combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. When AFRICOM reaches full operational capability and assumes responsibility for the 53 countries in Africa in October of 2008, coordinating similar strikes into Somalia and other countries will fall upon the new command.

The Global War on Terrorism is an excellent example of the challenges that AFRICOM will face. Although interagency synchronized operations to promote regional stability and prosperity will compromise much of the day to day activity in AFRICOM, ultimately it is a combatant command that must maintain the ability to conduct combat operations.

Chapter 6 Interagency Integration

Overview

AFRICOM will work closely with Department of State and USAID as a supporting command for many of the security assistance tasks in Africa. “According to DoD officials, the new command will seek greater interagency coordination with the State Department, USAID, and other government agencies and will have a larger non-DoD civilian staff than has been traditional with other combatant commands.” Up to 25% of the AFRICOM staff could be interagency personnel.¹ This is critical when, as pointed out earlier, regional stability will be a key goal that AFRICOM focuses on.

When it issued DOD Directive 3000.05 in 2005, the Department of Defense recognized the serious threat of regional instability to U.S. national interests. The directive defines stability operations as a core DoD mission. It gives stability operations priority analogous to combat operations. Although DoD has “traditionally focused on fighting and winning wars, defense strategy is now evolving to look at conflict prevention... addressing threats at their inception through increased emphasis on theater security cooperation and capacity building of partners and allies.”² The directive further clarifies the reality that AFRICOM will deal with. It acknowledges that many of the tasks associated with stability operations are better executed by civilian professionals,

¹ Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” 8.

² Ploch, “Africa Command: U.S. Strategic Interests and the Role of the U.S. Military in Africa,” 5.

either U.S. or foreign. Yet the directive also adds that despite this fact, the reality is that “U.S. military forces shall be prepared to perform all tasks necessary to establish or maintain order when civilians cannot do so.”³ There are two key points made that will factor into AFRICOM’s mission. First, stability operations have the same priority as combat operations. Second, although DoD may not be the ideal organization to accomplish a certain stability task, it must be prepared to accomplish required tasks when other agencies and departments cannot.

In recognizing both the importance of stability operations and the unique interagency coordination required to conduct them, the directive articulates several imperatives. These imperatives are critical to AFRICOM. DOD 3000.05 states that “integrated civilian and military efforts are crucial to successful stability operations. Whether conducting or supporting stability operations, the Department of Defense shall be prepared to work closely with relevant U.S. Departments and Agencies.”⁴ In practical execution of this task, the directive articulates the importance of forming military–civilian teams. It states that, “Military-civilian teams are a critical U.S. Government stability operations tool. The Department of Defense shall continue to lead and support the development of military-civilian teams.”⁵ This concept of developing military-civilian teams will be crucial to AFRICOM success.

³ Department of Defense, *DOD Directive 3000.05, Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, (Washington DC, 2005).

⁴ DOD, DOD Directive 3000.05, 3.

⁵ DOD, DOD Directive 3000.05, 3.

The U.S. Government's approach to the division of North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa also presents a unique set of challenges that AFRICOM must take into account. As discussed earlier, the U.S. State Department and USAID possess a majority of the authority and assets to conduct day to day security assistance activities in Africa. Yet both rely on the Department of Defense for execution and security of some aspects of the program. Once AFRICOM assumes responsibility for its geographic area as a unified command, it will do so partnered with State and USAID.

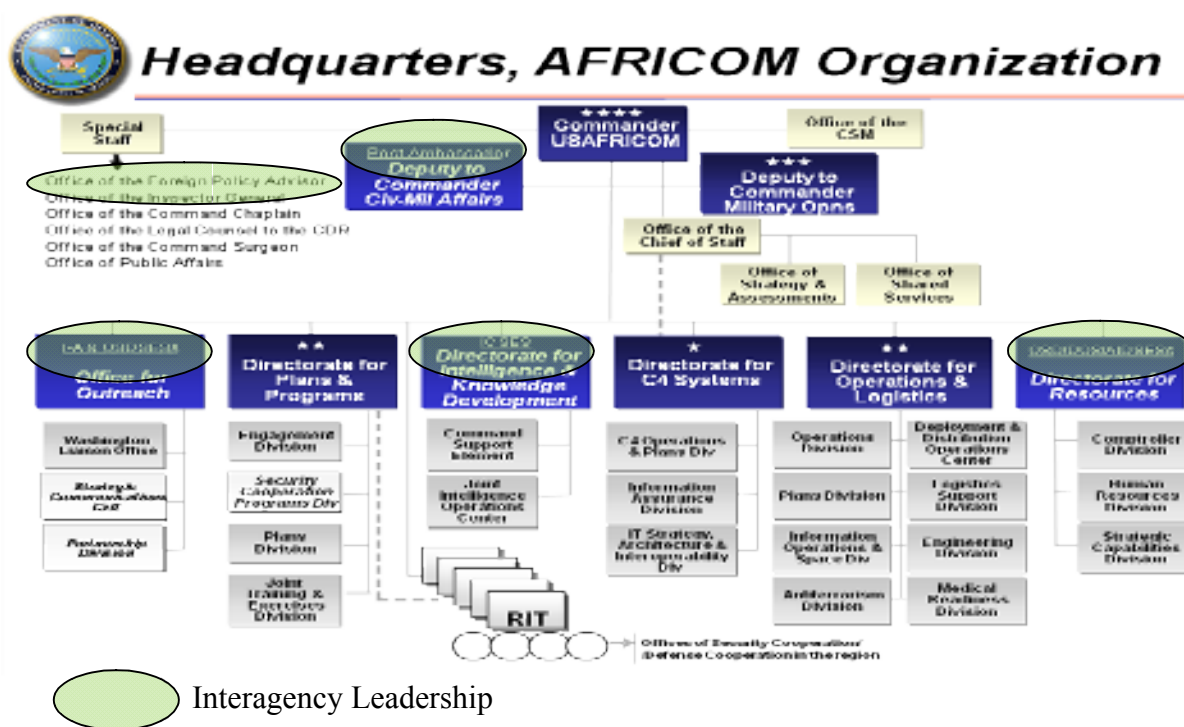
Both the Department of State and USAID have different geographic boundaries as they apply to the continent of Africa. The State Department divides Africa, much as the geography dictates. North Africa is covered by the Bureau of Near East Affairs which includes the countries of Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, and Morocco but also includes Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.⁶ The rest of Africa is covered by the Bureau of African Affairs. Each is headed by an Ambassador. USAID divides Africa in a similar manner but North Africa is covered by the Asia and Near East Region. North Africa is handled as a subregion. Currently, Morocco is the only country with an active USAID mission in the North Africa subregion.⁷ In Sub-Saharan Africa the USG is providing assistance to 47 countries. USAID currently has 23 bilateral missions on the continent. In addition, there are three regional missions that support activities in countries with a

⁶ U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/> (accessed 11 Feb 2008).

⁷ U.S. Agency for International Development, Asia and Near East, http://www.usaid.gov/locations/asia_near_east/countries/omep/ (accessed 11 Feb 2008).

limited USAID presence; USAID South Africa, USAID West Africa and USAID East Africa.⁸

AFRICOM, unique among the combatant commands, has a large compliment of assigned interagency personnel. In addition to the interagency personnel integrated throughout the command, there is also significant interagency leadership. The AFRICOM organization chart illustrates the high level of interagency participation. Most striking is the assignment of a former Ambassador as Deputy to the Commander for Civil Military Affairs.



⁸ U.S. Agency for International Development, Sub-Saharan Africa, http://www.usaid.gov/locations/sub-saharan_africa/ (accessed 11 Feb 2008).

⁹ Proposed AFRICOM structure, AFRICOM Command Brief.

While organization within the command is important, there are several key organization structures that will greatly contribute to AFRICOM success. These structures are a robust AFRICOM Washington Office and a rapidly deployable interagency survey and assessment team. These two recommendations have the added benefit of being easily implemented as they pertain to internal organizational structure

AFRICOM Washington Office

Because of the critical interagency relationship, which is the core AFRICOM enabler, a robust liaison team based in Washington, DC is crucial to success. There is currently a Washington Liaison Office under the Director of the Office for Outreach in the AFRICOM proposed organization. This is a great start, which acknowledges the importance of establishing a mechanism for coordination between DoD and the other departments and agencies based in Washington, DC. Because of its importance, the Deputy to the Commander for Military Operations should spend a majority of his or her time in Washington, DC manning the Washington Office.

U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) in Tampa Florida uses this technique to facilitate coordination in Washington. The day to day operations of the SOCOM Washington Office, which is based in the Pentagon, are handled by the office director, usually a Colonel. However the SOCOM Deputy Commanding General spends a majority of his time in the Washington Office, usually Monday through Friday unless priorities require his presence elsewhere. As a result, SOCOM activities in Washington are coordinated by a senior, experienced officer who is available to personally coordinate difficult, complex, and sometimes contentious issues.

AFRICOM can greatly benefit from a similar commitment to man the AFRICOM Washington Liaison Office. As Sean McFate points out when addressing the importance of AFRICOM, “Its four-star commander will be able to enhance policy decisions regarding Africa by advocating for African security issues on Capitol Hill and raising the military’s strategic awareness of the continent.”¹⁰ This will prove difficult at best from Stuttgart, Germany, the initial location for AFRICOM. With the added coordination required between AFRICOM and its interagency partners such as the Department of State and USAID, having a significant presence in Washington DC will prove beneficial and should be considered.

AFRICOM Interagency Survey and Assessment Team

Another organizational structure that would contribute directly to AFRICOM success is the AFRICOM Interagency Survey and Assessment Team or AISAT. Modeled after EUCOM’s Survey and Assessment Team, this small integrated team would deploy on short-notice to potential trouble spots. The team would be task organized with military and interagency personnel depending on the situation and mission. Much like the State Department’s Foreign Emergency Support Team (FEST), the AISAT would rapidly deploy to the crisis country to provide additional support to the Ambassador and country team. Like the FEST the AISAT would bring capabilities not normally available to the U.S. Mission:

- Twenty-four hour operations capability

¹⁰ McFate, “U.S Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm,” 11.

- Redundant communications to AFRICOM
- Military planning expertise

But unlike the FEST, its mission set would be much broader compared to the “terrorist act” response mission.¹¹ The team would also provide timely information to the AFRICOM Commander and staff to assist in military planning and to facilitate intelligence sharing.

Analysis of potential missions that the AISAT might support reveals how powerful a tool it could be for the AFRICOM commander. The non-combatant evacuation operations mission set provides compelling justification. As mentioned earlier, since 1990, sixteen military operations were conducted in Africa, specifically to ensure the protection and security of U.S. citizens. When this frequency is combined with the potential complexity and uncertainty of NEOs, the benefits of having AISAT capability is apparent. Also mentioned earlier is the emphasis that JP 3-68 places on the importance of the military commander and his staff coordinating the command and control and NEO missions with the chief of mission prior to commencement of the operation. When called upon early, the AISAT would provide the ability to coordinate the details required to execute the NEO.

¹¹ Department of State, “Foreign Emergency Support Team,” Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, <http://www.state.gov/s/ct/rls/fs/2002/13045.htm> (accessed December 28, 2007).

An example of the value of having the ability to quickly deploy a survey and assessment team occurred in September 2002 when EUCOM deployed a survey and assessment team to Cote d'Ivoire. Immediately after a failed coup, "the European Command (EUCOM) Survey and Assessment Team (ESAT) arrived to assist Ambassador Arlene Render and her staff at the Embassy in Abidjan to organize and carry out the evacuation of American citizens from dangerous locations."¹² EUCOM has also deployed its survey team in response to crisis in Africa on several other occasions to include, Sierra Leone in 1992, the Congo in 1997, Liberia in 1998 and the Central African Republic in 2002.¹³ The AISAT would provide even greater capability as a result of the interagency composition of the team. The AFRICOM commander will have a wider range of interagency expertise to draw upon in forming the AISAT for a specific mission, which in turn will translate to effectiveness in dealing with a wider range of challenges. Having interagency personnel integrated will also facilitate coordination with the country team.

The GCC can gain valuable insight from a deployed survey team that aids the planning and deployment process. During Operation Guardian Assistance, a relief and refugee repatriation mission in Uganda and Rwanda in late 1996, an advanced survey team provided critical information to EUCOM planners. As a result of the team's

¹² Department of State, "Prospects for Peace in Cote d'Ivoire", Walter H. Kansteiner, Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Testimony before the House Committee on International Relations, <http://www.state.gov/p/af/rls/rm/17657.htm> (accessed January 16, 2008).

¹³ United States European Command, "History of European Command Military Operations," <http://www.eucom.mil/english/Operations/history.asp?pagenum=1> (accessed January 16, 2008).

assessment, the task force that eventually deployed was much smaller and had a different composition than the task force originally envisioned. The initial plan called for attack helicopters and combat forces. Following the assessment of the operating environment provided by the survey team, the task force composition was modified to provide additional command and control, intelligence, and logistics.¹⁴ The value to the commander of accurate assessment ensured that the deploying force was optimized for the mission.

Creation of a robust AFRICOM Washington Office and an AISAT are two relatively simple but effective organizational structures that AFRICOM should implement. A third recommendation for effective interagency integration pertains to command philosophy for interagency employment. As pointed out earlier, AFRICOM has integrated interagency personnel throughout the command. This is a great start. Going a step further though, AFRICOM should also integrate interagency personnel into command processes. An example of this, as previously mentioned, is integration of interagency personnel into the AISAT. Another example would be to train and allow interagency personnel to lead operational planning teams and joint planning groups when appropriate. On the other hand, military personnel assigned to AFRICOM should be encouraged to attend training offered by the Foreign Service Institute and other government agencies. AFRICOM should also limit interagency working groups that would segregate planning and coordination from military planners. AFRICOM must aggressively resist any effort to stovepipe interagency activity in the command and

¹⁴ Edwin P. Smith, "Joint Task Forces and Preemptive Response," *Joint Force Quarterly*, Autumn /Winter 1998-99, 93.

instead take every opportunity to integrate interagency personnel into every process. Instead of asking why, the question should be why not. As mentioned earlier “Military-civilian teams are a critical U.S. Government stability operations tool. The Department of Defense shall continue to lead and support the development of military-civilian teams.”¹⁵ Fully integrating interagency personnel into all aspects of AFRICOM structure and function is critical to success.

Other organizational structures and processes will emerge and evolve as AFRICOM matures. Yet through establishment of a robust AFRICOM Washington Office and a rapidly deployable interagency survey and assessment team along with adopting an interagency integration philosophy, AFRICOM will be well on its way to establishing itself as a truly integrated command.

¹⁵ DOD, DOD Directive 3000.05, 3.

Chapter 7 Conclusion

“Peace Corps types only stay around long enough to realize they’re not helping anyone. Government only wants to stay in power until they’ve stolen enough to go into exile somewhere else. The rebels, they’re not sure they want to take over otherwise they’d have to govern this mess. TIA, this is Africa” *Danny Archer in Blood Diamond*.¹

When President Bush announced the formation of AFRICOM, the Department of Defense and other agencies and departments of the U.S. government were presented with a unique opportunity to develop and execute a coordinated effort in Africa. As pointed out in this thesis, the history of DoD’s delineation of responsibility in Africa has been marked by division of the continent between two to three GCCs. The establishment of AFRICOM corrects this problem.

Having established a GCC that can focus on the continent of Africa, the question then becomes, “What should be the primary focus of the command?” When examining executive guidance, regional stability and combating terrorism are the two major recurring U.S. interests that are highlighted. The operating environment in Africa presents several challenges to U.S. interests. The wide variety of culture, language and demographics/culture will require unique solutions tailored to the situation. Pandemic outbreaks of devastating disease add to instability created by regional and local conflict. And in the USG’s fight against terrorism, the large amount of ungoverned territory made

¹ Leonardo DiCaprio, *Blood Diamond*, DVD, Directed by Edward Zwick, Burbank, CA: Warner Brother Pictures, 2007.

possible by the high number of failed or failing states, provides a safe haven for terror groups.

To best combat the challenges presented by the operating environment in Africa, executive guidance included a directive for the command to have a robust interagency component. As a result, the decision was made to assign a senior executive service and former Ambassador from the State Department as Deputy to the Commander for Civil Military Affairs, appropriately recognizing the criticality of interagency cooperation. By assigning interagency personnel to AFRICOM and integrating them into the organization structure, greater interagency cooperation is possible relative to the other GCCs. By implementing structural integration and a philosophy that eliminates the boundaries between DoD and other USG departments and agencies, AFRICOM might well become a model for the “Combatant Command for the 21st Century”.

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